

Executive Update

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker's Weekly Newsletter

December 29, 2006

We began 2006 with a Reality Tour to talk about the significant shortfall the county faced because of pension and health care costs as well as state mandates and lost state and federal aid. In the past few days, we made significant progress on addressing those costs for 2007 and beyond. We reached an agreement with our largest union that will cap the pension back drop and change our health care costs. In return, we provide job security and our savings help pay for future wage incentives. It cost the county some \$300,000 per month not to have the savings in health care, so this is a major victory for our budget.

As we look ahead to 2007, there is plenty of excitement in the county. Our parks are doing better. The Zoo will start take bids in a month for a new waterpark. There are more projects moving in the Milwaukee County Research Park. We are selling land on the Park East Corridor for major projects. Our FamilyCare partnership with the state is meeting budget. We will again break the all-time record for passengers at General Mitchell International Airport. The County/City action team is making progress on housing options for people with mental illness. We are finding new ways to help veterans in our county.

Looking ahead to 2007, I have several hopes for the New Year. I hope for a decline in the violence and a safer community. I hope for a year filled with better health driven by more people exercising and watching their diet and medications. I hope for a better quality of life as people enjoy our wonderful assets like the lakefront, the parks, the Zoo and so many more. I hope for a year of attracting more businesses to the region and helping those here to grow. I hope to do more to hold down the tax burden this year so people can afford to live here. I hope for a year where people respect each other and support their neighbors.

Happy New Year! Scott

P.S. Don't forget to join me, Tonette and our boys down at Red Arrow Park to kick in the new year!

Walker To Ring in the New Year at Red Arrow Park



County Executive Scott Walker will ring in the New Year at the Red Arrow Park ice rink. Bartolotta Fireworks will provide a fireworks display to help kick off 2007.

Red Arrow Ice Rink will be open from 11:00am to 1am on December 31st. Skaters may use the rink for free if they bring their own skates. Ice skates may be rented throughout the season at \$5.00 per pair. Open hours during the season are Monday through Thursday 11am to 9pm, Friday and Saturday 11am to 11pm, and Sunday 11am to 6pm.

Before heading to Red Arrow Park, stop by the New Year's Eve party at the Mitchell Park Domes, 524 S. Layton Blvd., on Sunday evening, December 31st. The fun begins at 6:00pm and ends at 10:00pm. There will be entertainment for everyone regardless of age.

The Garlic Mustard Pickers Band will kick off the evening along with Jim Mooney. Need a laugh? Let Comedy Sportz tickle your funny bone with two shows; 7 – 8pm and 8:30 – 9:30pm. And if you love magic, then catch Magician Ron Fable at 7:30pm.



Walker Signs New EMS Contract In Franklin



Walker signed the new EMS contract with Milwaukee County municipalities Thursday at the Franklin Fire Department. Walker was joined by Supervisors Mark Borkowski and Paul Cesarz, Franklin Mayor Tom Taylor, Oak Creek Mayor Richard Bolender and representatives from the various municipalities who provide paramedic services in the county. The new contract gives municipalities more flexibility to bill for services and gives them the opportunity to market services to neighboring communities.

Walker Opens New Courthouse Parking Lot



The new lot replaces the old annex structure and features floodlights that dramatically highlight the newly exposed west side of the courthouse and a small portion of the former "Whale Wall."

Freedom To Be Commissioned in Milwaukee



The United States Navy has announced that the new Littoral Combat Ship, the Freedom, will be commissioned at Veteran's Park in Milwaukee this fall. The Freedom was built by Marinette Marine Corp. in Marinette, WI. "After a thorough analysis of the many factors involved in selecting a site, Secretary Winter decided to have Freedom commissioned in Milwaukee," said Lt. Cmdr. John T. Schofield, a spokesman for Navy Secretary Donald C. Winter. "Freedom is being built in Wisconsin, and it is appropriate to commission the ship in that great state."

Freedom is the first-in-its-class littoral combat ship. The ship is 377 feet long and its name from littorals, or coastal waters. It will be used to combat threats along coast or in shallow waters.

County Executive Walker said the decision by the Navy was "outstanding. For us, this is a really big deal." After the week long series of events celebrating the commissioning the ship will leave for its permanent port in San Diego.